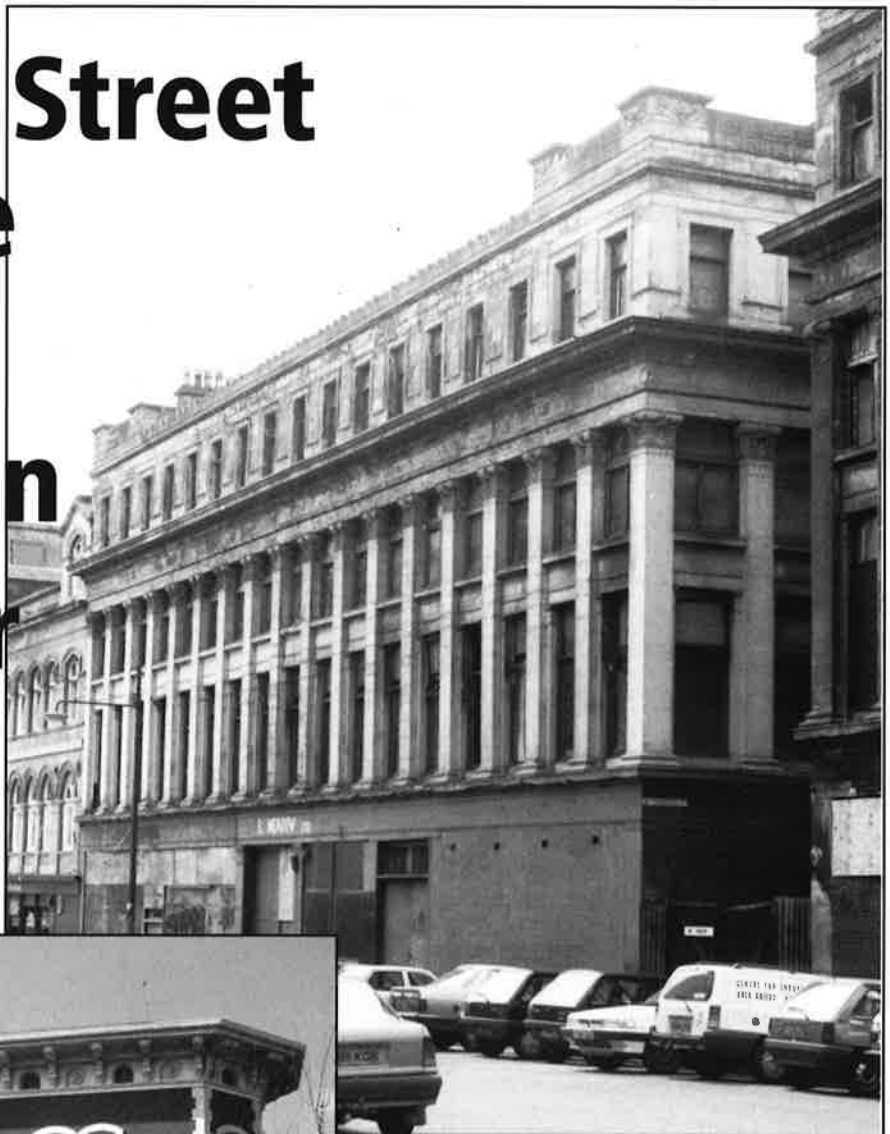


# *The Alexander Thomson Society Newsletter*

Nº33, May 2003

**Watson Street  
collapse  
'Gothic'  
Thomson  
Summer  
Events**



**A  
Nicholson  
in the USA**

# Cases

There is no reason for complacency when it comes to the surviving works of Alexander 'Greek' Thomson! Since the last Newsletter appeared, one building has disappeared and another is now threatened with demolition. The only good news would seem to be that the long-running impasse over funding the restoration of Egyptian Halls seems to have been resolved.

## The Watson Street Warehouse

It is depressing to have to record that both of the warehouses by Thomson and/or Turnbull near Glasgow Cross have now gone. In contemplating the now empty site bounded by Watson Street and Bell Street, it is difficult not to quote Oscar Wilde: "to lose one... may be regarded as a misfortune; to lose both looks like carelessness."

What is particularly depressing is that, unlike the late lamented warehouse in Bell Street, the Watson Street warehouse seemed at long last to have a future. Since the demolition of the first, long derelict building, Historic Scotland and Glasgow City Council had tried to secure the future of the other one. Despite seemingly endless delays, a developer, Alba Town, was in place who wished to restore and convert the structure and an excellent



design for this work and for building on the adjacent sites had been made by Siroos Gholami together with our own committee member, Mark Baines, for which planning and listed building consent had been granted.

This may not be quite the end, however. Although replica façades are not usually desirable, in this case we believe that the austere elegance of the warehouse design deserves recreation, especially as the demolished warehouse was one of the last surviving examples in the city of a particular trabeated Classical type – a Neo-Classical treatment in a tradition which may be traced from Schinkel to Mies van der Rohe.

Furthermore, as the lost building was severely decayed and would have required much new stone indentation, to create a new stone façade might even be easier and cheaper. The Thomson façade design was a carefully proportioned rectilinear composition of ashlar stone, the only elaborate

carving and decoration being on the pilaster capitals; it would therefore not be difficult to recreate. We have therefore asked the City Council to insist that any replacement building on the site reproduces the lost façade (the interesting interior iron and timber structure of the original warehouse was less important, we feel, and much harder to justify reproducing).

Mark Baines writes: "It is sad to announce that the warehouse in Watson Street, near Glasgow Cross, suffered a major collapse on Sunday, 19th January, when part of the rear wall fell. The occupants of the adjoining building had to be evacuated because the mutual party wall began to separate from the floors. On Monday, following exhaustive meetings between Building Control, the Planning department and the developer, who had only recently bought the building, it was decided in the interests of safety that the building be demolished. The dangers involved with any attempt to retain the façade

were considered too great and too complex for the developer and so the demolition was carried out under the supervision of the City Council. The collapse was a case of history repeating itself, for around twenty years ago the city had to intervene when the building then threatened to collapse and a temporary steel structure had to be inserted in one half of the building to keep it standing. Without a roof and open to the elements, decay was inevitable. The precarious state of the building in recent times was such that it was considered too dangerous to survey. Within the last few months the building had received listed building consent for conversion into twenty apartments and a building warrant application was about to have been submitted that very week. Had it survived, the Watson Street warehouse would have enjoyed a significant position within a larger urban design proposal for Glasgow Cross."

## Egyptian Halls

The fate of Thomson's finest commercial building recently lay in the balance. Despite the general recognition of the importance of Egyptian Halls both architecturally and commercially on its central city site in Union Street, and the quality of the proposals made for it by the architects and surveyors working for Derek Souter of Union Street

Properties, which owns a majority – 53% - of the building, offers of grant aid from Historic Scotland remained inadequate while arguments continued over the merits or otherwise of stone cleaning. In December, Glasgow City Council threatened not to renew the Compulsory Purchase Order on the building unless a funding deal was finalised by January 17th.

The society then lobbied both Historic Scotland and Glasgow City Council appealing for some public-interested common sense to be applied, and your chairman wrote the following letter to the *Herald* on January 8th, which was subsequently published:

"The future of one of Glasgow's finest historic buildings is in danger owing to bureaucratic inertia and the failure of public authorities to act in concert in the public interest. As you have reported (28th December), Glasgow City Council has threatened to withdraw from a compulsory purchase agreement over the Egyptian Halls if the potential developer, Union Street Properties, fails to sign up to a £3.7 million funding package by 17th January. If that happens, the current proposals for restoring and refurbishing this major work by Alexander 'Greek' Thomson will collapse, much money – both public and private – will have been wasted, and one of the finest commercial buildings of its date in Britain will continue to decay, possibly fatally.

"We are not competent to comment on the precise levels of grant aid being offered by both Historic Scotland and Glasgow City Council. However, the following facts seem to be clear. Egyptian Halls is a large Grade 'A' listed building whose partial dereliction and poor condition (owing to the usual Glasgow curse of multiple ownership), despite being in the heart of the city, has been a scandal for decades. Following the failure of an unsatisfactory 1995 scheme for refurbishment, Union Street Properties, which is now owns just over 50% of the property, offers the best hope for positive action. This company has employed reputable engineers and architects to survey the building and their restoration proposals are sane and, in the context of Glasgow, impressively conservative and respectful.

"Historic Scotland's initial grant offer was only £250,000 but this has now been raised to £930,000. However, while it is true that its budget is severely constrained as the Scottish Executive has shown a lamentable lack of interest in this nation's architectural heritage, Historic Scotland was prepared to offer a higher figure seven years ago to the earlier, more destructive redevelopment scheme. Furthermore, the current shortfall of some £400,000 which the developer, having already almost doubled his financial stake in the project, feels unable to meet is largely created by Historic Scotland's insistence on a much more throughgoing scheme for stone cleaning and repair to the façade, although it is by no means clear that this is urgently necessary, or even desirable given the huge damage done to

sandstone structures in Glasgow by cleaning. In effect, the agency charged with protecting Scotland's architectural heritage is driving the price of restoring Egyptian Halls upwards.

"Much more reprehensible is the behaviour of Scottish Enterprise Glasgow which declines to aid this project although, as the Glasgow Development Agency, it was prepared to offer £245,000 to that earlier scheme. If the regeneration of a large, underused commercial structure, of cultural importance to Glasgow, in a city centre street struggling to improve does not fit with its priorities, it is hard to understand what this development agency is for.

"Negotiations over rescuing the Egyptian Halls have now been going on for a decade. If the C.P.O. is withdrawn and the current scheme collapses, we are probably back to square one. By the time a new proposal can proceed, Thomson's magnificent building will have decayed further and will cost much more to repair. Over and over again, Glasgow has suffered from the failure of the Council to enforce repairs until costs have escalated or it is too late: cannot this lesson be learned? It seems to us absurd and irresponsible to quibble over money now when the consequence can only be much higher repair bills in the future.

"It was, however, much to the credit of Glasgow City Council both to proceed with and successfully fight a challenge to the Compulsory Purchase Order in the attempt to break the long deadlock over the Egyptian Halls. To pull out now, after so much good work, would be a

disaster and a tragedy for Glasgow. We therefore appeal to the Lord Provost – in whose ward Thomson's building stands – to take vigorous action now to knock some sense into both his Council and Historic Scotland to ensure that Glasgow doesn't lose yet another valuable historic building for no good reason."

Whether or not owing to our intervention, on January 20th it was announced that agreement had been reached between the owners, Historic Scotland and the council whereby Glasgow City Council would purchase Egyptian Halls shortly before the C.P.O. expired on February 3rd, and then transfer it to Union Street Properties when the funding proposals and grant aid had been finalised. We breathed a sigh of relief and now look forward to learning about, and seeing, progress on the rehabilitation of this unique building.

## West Regent Street/Wellington Street

We had assumed that, following the failure of the legal challenge by County Properties to the validity of the Scottish planning system of their proposals to demolish the building enlarged by Thomson and used at his office at the end of his life, all was well – or at least better. County Properties sold the building and the new owners intended to repair the exterior.

We were happy with their proposals, as most of the interiors had been mutilated or were in very poor condition after the building had stood empty for so long, and assisted surveyors acting for them with information.

We are therefore dismayed to learn that a *volte face* has occurred and that listed building consent has been applied for. We seem to be back to square one, except that the building is now in worse condition. We trust, however, that Historic Scotland will continue to oppose demolition.

## The St Vincent Street Church

We are sorry to have to report that there is nothing to report. The Alexander 'Greek' Thomson Trust, which is responsible for pursuing the restoration of this great church and for investigating alternative uses of the basement to secure an income for maintenance, has not been convened for many months. We cannot understand why, and nor can the World Monuments Fund which now proposes to put the St Vincent Street Church back on its Watch List of the World's 100 Most Threatened Buildings.

# Not Michael Angelo, after all

PROFESSOR James Stevens Curl has written to correct the article in the last *Newsletter* regarding the ascription of the Court House in Eglinton (formerly Muff) to Michael Angelo Nicholson.

"...The whole Nicholson involvement at Muff has been fully chronicled in my *The Londonderry Plantation 1609-1914: The History, Architecture, and Planning of the Estates of the City of London and its Livery Companies in Ulster*, published by Phillimore & Co Ltd., Chichester, in 1986, widely and well reviewed then, 504 pages long, with copious illustrations, and still in print, so it is hardly an obscure tome.

"As my original research made clear, the final design of the Court-House was by James Bridger, who appears to have freely adapted his scheme from some original designs by Nicholson, but, as Bridger was also working at Banagher, not far away from Muff, at the time, and as his work there is very similar in architectural treatment of the fenestration, there is another reason for ascribing Muff to Bridger. The papers of both *The Ironmongers' and Grocers' Companies* specifically mention Bridger, so there can be no doubt of his involvement.

"The Minutes refer to a clock being replaced by the Grocers' Arms in Nicholson's design, but the Grocers' Arms are in a position today where no clock could ever have been placed. It seems that Nicholson's scheme was



abandoned and Bridger's was substituted. The papers of the Companies refer to plans by Bridger, and to journeys made by Bridger, and this is *after* Nicholson's involvement. It is obvious that Nicholson's schemes were dropped, and that Bridger was given full responsibility for the design and erection of the building."

Professor Curl also raises the question of describing Muff as being situated in 'Co. Derry' rather than 'Co. Londonderry':

"...There never was an Irish County called 'Derry': the County of Londonderry was a specially created parcel of land, comprising the old County of Coleraine, to which bits of Counties Antrim, Donegal, and Tyrone were added in order to make the proposition more attractive to the City of London, whose 55 Livery Companies were responsible for the 'Plantation' or Colonisation there. It is complete and utter historical nonsense to refer to County Londonderry as anything other than precisely that."

On the first point, I'm happy to admit my mistake: I was mis-

led by an official website promoting tourism in Northern Ireland, and I hadn't come across Professor Curl's work (currently available at £60.00, or £54.00 online from the publishers).

As to the second point, attempting to resolve the question one way or another could prove politically contentious. At the time Bridger was working, it was definitely Co. Londonderry: modern usage, however, varies.

Dominic d'Angelo

## Thomson Grave Monument

WORK on the monument to go on the unmarked grave of

Thomson and his family in the Southern Necropolis, a design by Edward Taylor and Graeme Andrew that won the revived Alexander Thomson Studentship in 1999, is going slowly but surely ahead – thanks to the generous financial support of Murray Dunlop Architects.

The black granite has now been cut and the completed monument is at the Aberdeenshire workshop of Fyfe Glenrock awaiting the incision of the inscriptions and decorative details. If all goes well, the monument can be raised over Thomson's grave before the end of the year.

# A Nicholson in America

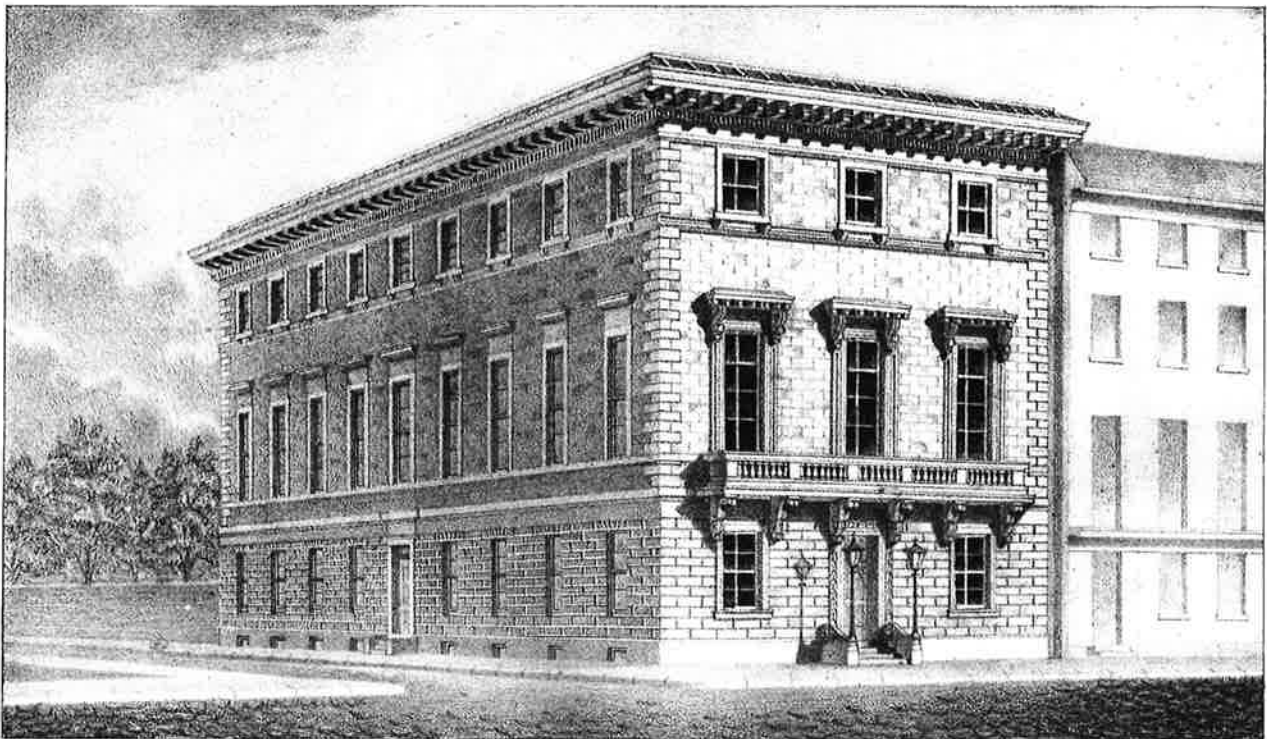
**W**HEN THE very young, would-be architect Peter Angelo Nicholson (1829-1902) sailed in 1845 from Britain to Philadelphia, he had little to show but his name. But what a name! He was the grandson of Peter Nicholson (1765-1844), the celebrated Scottish-born author of *The Carpenter's New Guide* (1792), the era's most popular builder's manual. Between 1818 and 1867 there appeared at least seventeen pirated American editions; scarcely an architect or builder in young Peter's adopted country can have failed to know it. He himself was marinated in architecture: he was the son of the architect and draftsman

Michael Angelo Nicholson (c. 1796-1841) and his sisters would shortly marry two Glasgow architects: Alexander Thomson and John Baird.

Nicholson evidently carried a letter of introduction to John Notman, one of Philadelphia's leading architects. Notman was himself a Scottish émigré and a pupil of Peter's father. Now Notman returned the favour and took young Peter under his wing, making him one of his assistants. He had just won the competition for the city's Athenaeum, a gentleman's club whose architecture reflected the fashionable Renaissance Revival of London's recent clubs. Perhaps he needed office help; at any rate, Nicholson was soon

making the accomplished perspective rendering (*below*) with which Notman advertised his new building.

While Nicholson toiled for Notman, another émigré found himself in a similar situation. Theodore Wadskier (1827-1898) was born on the Danish island of St Croix and later studied architecture in Copenhagen. In 1850 he emigrated to the United States, where his uncle served as the Danish ambassador. Like Nicholson, Wadskier also found a situation with an established local figure. This was Samuel Sloan, that ambitious builder-turned-architect who aggressively promoted his Philadelphia practice to a national audience



John Notman, Archt

Lith. of T. Sinclair, Phila

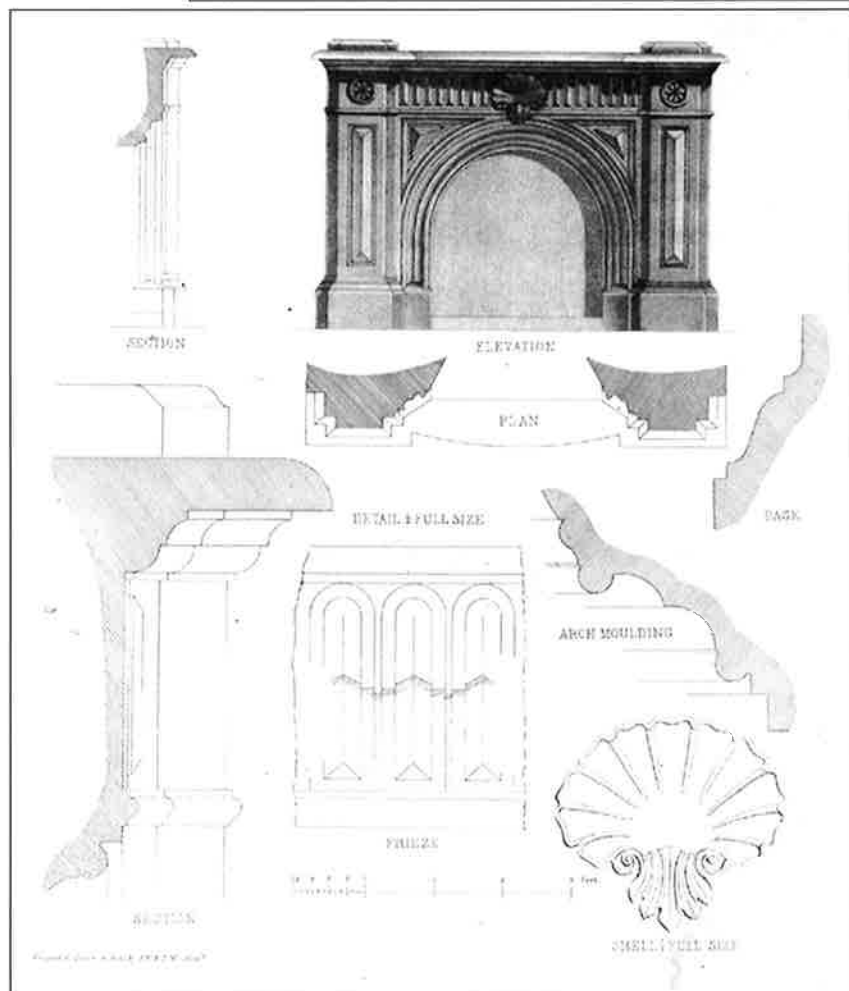
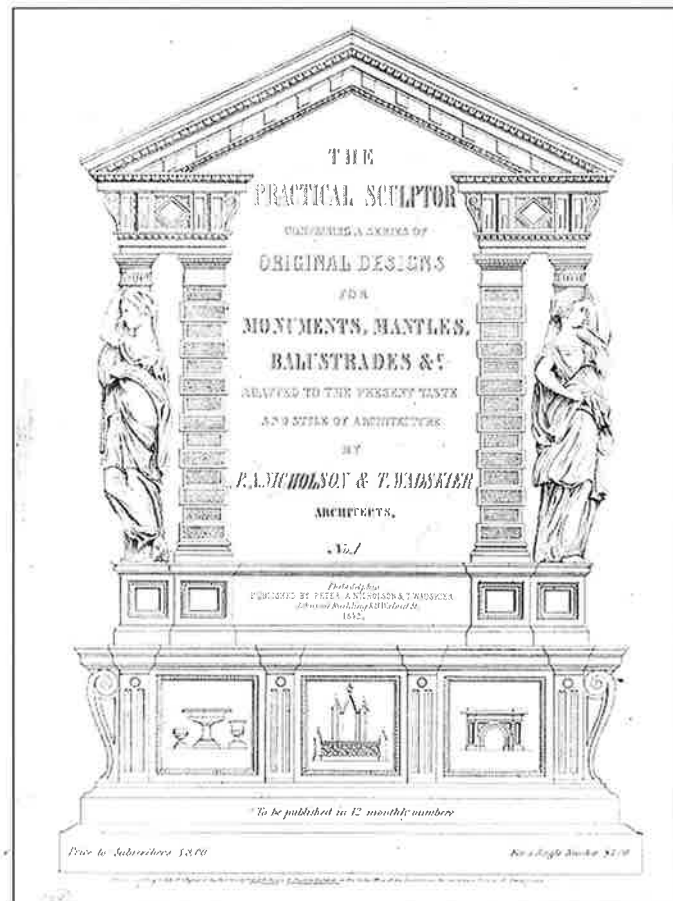
On Stone by P. A. Nicholson

ANTHONY & CO.



with a ceaseless stream of pattern books, of indifferent originality but marvellous comprehensiveness. One of these was Nicholson's *The Carpenter's New Guide*, which Sloan reissued in pirated versions in 1854, 1856 and 1860. When Sloan opened a drawing academy in 1850, Wadskier was his principal instructor.

How Nicholson and Wadskier met remains uncertain. Did Nicholson visit Sloan's office, seeking some sort of royalty arrangement on behalf of his grandfather's estate? Whatever the occasion, the ambitions of the two young émigrés ran higher than serving as draftsmen and renderers. In 1852 they made their gambit. They rented rooms at 103 Walnut Street, Philadelphia and launched the architectural firm of Nicholson & Wadskier. (At the same time Nicholson joined the St Andrew's Society, where fashionable Philadelphians of Scottish descent met in state.) Finally, having observed Sloan's strategy of self-promotion-through-publication, and knowing the Nicholson legacy, the two young architects produced a book of their own. In 1852 they brought out *The Practical Sculptor, Comprising a Series of Original Designs for Monuments, Mantles, Balustrades, Adapted to the Present Taste and Style of Architecture*. It seems to have done poorly, and very few copies survive.





This cumbersomely titled volume launched a middling career. From about 1852 to 1855 Nicholson & Wadskier practised in Philadelphia, although not a single project has come to light. There cannot have been too many: in 1856 they relocated to the boomtown of Chicago. In that year Nicholson built a lavish house in Ottawa, Illinois, for William Reddick, a prominent local politician. The house was a taut and graceful essay in the Italianate mode of Samuel Sloan, accomplished although hardly unconventional. The newly relocated firm seems to have required local knowledge

and assistance with the commission, and it was built in collaboration with the Chicago architect William B. Olmsted. It remains the only documented building by Nicholson.

Why Nicholson should have remained in the background is unclear: his client was one of the leading citizens in Ottawa (*see panel, right*), his commission an expensive one.

In *Old Illinois Houses*, the Reddick mansion is described as:

An imposing old-style mansion, three stories high and redolent of the gaudy era of American architecture.... It is of red brick, with white stone facing, and there is a legend that the bricks

were hauled by wagons from Milwaukee. Reddick built on such a grand scale that his house and outbuildings occupied half the block... with an alley at the west end of the property.... Along the alley were a horse barn, a carriage house, and a two-story smokehouse of such size that now [in 1941] it has been converted into the home of the library custodian.

Upon their arrival in Chicago Nicholson and Wadskier signed the Architects' Code of Chicago – a pioneering statement of professional solidarity in the United States.

By 1865, however, the partnership must have ended, for Nicholson was in



## William Reddick: Sheriff, senator, philanthropist



partnership with William B Olmsted again, as "Olmsted & Nicholson, Architects, 16 Dearborn, 3rd Floor" according to the 1865 *Chicago City Directory*.

For reasons that have never been adequately explained, Nicholson left Chicago around 1867 and returned to Philadelphia. The change in fortune cannot have been a happy one, for he now abandoned his practice for the very career he had once found beneath him: the role of uncredited draftsman. He found a berth in the office of James Hamilton Windrim (1840-1916), another protégé of John Notman. Windrim had just won the competition for Philadelphia's Masonic Temple, a rugged granite affair, with robust quarry-faced walls and a pronounced bigness of scale in its ornament.

If there is a vague Scottish quality about this work – a certain lithic sternness, expressed in large-boned granite walls – it stamps much of Philadelphia's architecture of this era. It is certainly present in the adjacent City Hall, by John McArthur, yet one more Scottish émigré in that Hibernian enclave. In this émigré world, Nicholson would have been a prominent figure; perhaps he even served as a point of contact for those other Scotsmen who continued to pour into the city during the

**W**ILLIAM Reddick was born in Co. Down, Ireland, in 1812, his family emigrating to America in 1816. In 1825 he was apprenticed to a glass blower in West Virginia. In 1830 he moved to Brownsville, PA to work, where he married. The Reddicks moved to Washington, D.C., in 1832, where he continuing work as a glass blower while attending night school.

In 1835, the Reddicks moved to a farm in LaSalle Co., Illinois. In 1838 he was elected county sheriff, moved to Ottawa, the county seat, and was subsequently re-elected for four consecutive terms 1836-1846. From 1846 he was elected to the Illinois Senate for three successive two-year terms. He twice failed to win election to the US Senate in 1852 and 1854, but in 1870 was returned to the state senate for two years.

Reddick supported Stephen Douglas against Abraham Lincoln in a series of seven public debates centring on the issue of slavery before the 1858 Senate election. The first of these took place in Ottawa in Washington Park, immediately in front of the mansion (Douglas stayed in the house beforehand). Lincoln lost the Senate race, but the publication of his speeches led to his

successful Presidential campaign in 1860.

Reddick operated a general store in Ottawa from 1854 to 1873, was a member of a company chartered to build a hotel in Ottawa, president of the Illinois Bridge Company and one of the founders of the Ottawa Glass Works. His fortune, however, was amassed in real estate. Owning several large farms in several townships, Reddick's fortune was estimated to be \$300,000 in 1877. Twenty years earlier, the mansion had cost him \$25,000 (equivalent to \$750,000 today).

Aside from business and political ventures, Reddick was a philanthropist. He served on a committee which laid the foundation for the University of Illinois and was instrumental in organising a free public school system in Ottawa.

Reddick's wife died in 1883, and he died two years later. An adopted daughter died in 1887. After his death in the house, Reddick left \$100,000 to found and maintain a library in his home. The library moved to purpose-built accommodation in the 1970s and the house is now open to the public.

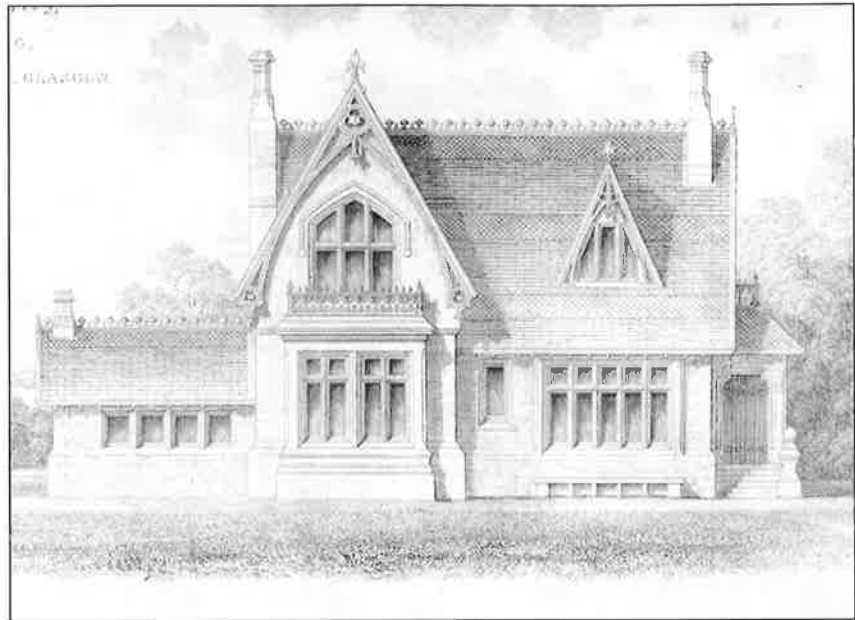
*Continued on Page 17*

By GAVIN STAMP

# 'Gothic' Thomson

GREEK THOMSON was not always Greek. There are, of course, Egyptian and other exotic elements in his work while in his early Picturesque villas he was happy to use the conventional round-arched Italianate style. What is surprising, perhaps, in view of Thomson's powerful diatribes against the Gothic Revival in general and George Gilbert Scott's design for the new University buildings in particular, is that at certain points in his career he was also prepared to use not only the Baronial but also a Gothic manner in his architecture. This is not generally appreciated, but posterity has covered his tracks. As most of Thomson's drawings and all of his professional papers are lost (along with most of his Gothic buildings in Glasgow) we would not know today that he had sometimes strayed from his own principles – from emulating the purest response to those importunate Eternal Laws – if he had not himself chosen to publish one of those Gothic designs and if a few others had not been included in the list of works compiled in 1879 by his friend, the Revd John Stark, which accompanied the Alexander Thomson Memorial trust deed, registered in 1883 [1].

The Gothic design Thomson allowed to be published was that for 'Seymour Lodge' at Cove and, in consequence, it became one of his most imitated and influential works.



Above: Seymour Lodge, Cove, elevation: detail from *Villa and Cottage Architecture*, 1868.

It was one of the several designs, ostensibly by A. & G. Thomson, which was included in *Villa and Cottage Architecture* published by Blackie in book form in 1868. This is perhaps surprising as the villa dates from 1850 while the plates illustrating Thomson's modified and improved design for it can only have been prepared in 1865 at the earliest, by which time Thomson was already publicly hostile to the Gothic Revival in Scotland [2]. It is difficult to understand why he chose to publish what was, by then, both an old-fashioned and an uncharacteristic design.

In the accompanying text, Thomson (we presume) wrote that "The style of the design is an adaptation of the later Gothic, and of a somewhat more ornamental character than usual in houses of this

size." The design was, in truth, not that remarkable and, with its triangular gables, its mullioned and transomed windows and asymmetrical massing, owed much to the asymmetrical, Picturesque designs for Gothic and Tudor villas (by E.B. Lamb and others) illustrated in the several editions of the influential *Encyclopædia of Cottage, Farm and Villa Architecture* compiled by Thomson's compatriot, John Claudius Loudon, and first published in 1833. The distinctively Thomsonian features would seem to be the wide segmental Gothic arch over the first-floor drawing room window and the large triangular dormer. In some ways the design is inept as well as derivative (especially when compared to what Pugin and Butterfield were doing in

England by this date), for Thomson failed to give the main roof the same high pitch that he adopted for the gables and dormer facing the Clyde.

Inept or no, Seymour Lodge must have appealed to many of the Glasgow middle-class as it was much imitated. There are several mutations elsewhere along Shore Road in Cove and Kilcreggan (such as 'Dunvronaig' and 'Dunvorleigh'), possibly designed by Thomson, or by his former partner John Baird II (who might have had a hand in the design for Seymour Lodge itself), or by William Motherwell. Seymour Lodge itself seems to have been designed for Thomas Forgan, the builder who, together with the railway contractor and ironfounder John McElroy, was largely responsible for the development of villas on the Rosneath peninsula on land feued from the Duke of Argyll.

Elsewhere, the terrace of four houses called 'Woodside Cottages' at Langbank can also be attributed to Thomson on stylistic grounds while further versions of Seymour Lodge were built in Lenzie much later in the 1870s. These, which include the double villas in Heriot Road, were probably the work of Thomson's last partner and successor, Robert Turnbull.

Thomson himself also used this style of "later Gothic" in Glasgow itself, notably in the Crossmyloof Buildings in Baker Street, Langside. These were



Above: Woodside Cottages, Langbank: Gavin Stamp, 1998.

Below: Crossmyloof Buildings: Frank Worsdall, 1964 [Glasgow City Libraries & Archives].



two terraces of model working men's houses built in 1855-56 for Neale Thomson of Camphill and, alas, demolished in c.1964 (the attribution to Thomson is confirmed by a notice in the *Edinburgh Building Chronicle* for 1st July 1856). The Gothic treatment was most evident at the ends of the terraces, in the wide

segmental arched window in the (asymmetrical) gables, but why Thomson chose the style for this commission is not known. What can also be definitely attributed to Thomson are the four Gothic cottages ornés which once stood in St Andrew's Drive, for two of them were cited in John Stark's Memorial list of works.

Built in 1851 and demolished by Glasgow Corporation in 1963, these were among the first villas to be built in the new suburb of Pollokshields. 'Green Gables' was similar in style to Seymour Lodge, although more compactly planned with the entrance placed centrally rather than as a single-storey annexe as at Cove. 'Lincoln Villa' was more remarkable in that it had a semi-dormer covered by a lifted-up section of the main roof (a Normandy feature?) and a double-height projecting bay-window below the prominent gable.

Now this last feature is particularly interesting, for it was terminated by a polygonal high-pitched roof within the triangular gable. This is a treatment which can be found in old Scottish houses, such as Pinkie House at Musselburgh, but it is also characteristic of the simplified vernacular Gothic houses of the great Welby Pugin. It appears at the rectory at Rampisham, Dorset, of 1846 and on Pugin's own house at Ramsgate, 'The Grange', begun in 1843. The Rampisham design was never published, however, while The Grange was not illustrated until 1853 (in *The Builder*), so it is possible that both Thomson and Pugin independently derived the idea from similar precedents. There can be no doubt, however, that Thomson knew all about the English prophet of Mediævalism and had read his books, for he



Above: Green Gables, St Andrew's Drive, Pollokshields: photograph 1961 [National Monuments Record of Scotland].

Below: Lincoln Villa, St Andrew's Drive: Frank Worsdall, 1961 [National Monuments Record of Scotland].



deliberately and cleverly turned Pugin's arguments on their heads in his two public lectures in which he attacked the Gothic.

This double-height bay window within a gable also appears at either end of the pair

of semi-detached houses known as 'Braehead Villa' in Netherlee Road, Cathcart, and convincingly attributed to Thomson. This pair would seem to have been built in c.1853 for Robert Couper, the paper manufacturer who, with

his brother James, owned the nearby Millholm paper mill on the Cart. (A few years later, of course, thanks to their greater affluence, James Couper would ask Thomson to design 'Holmwood' close by while Robert Couper went to James Smith for 'Sunnyside', the now-demolished Baronial villa which once stood adjacent.) There is a story that the Couper Brothers also asked Thomson to design a similar pair of semi-detached houses as summer residences at Cove, and certainly the pair originally called 'Cove Cottage', and now 'Ashlea' and 'Ellerslie', built in c.1850-51 opposite Cove Pier is very similar to the Braehead Villa.

Unfortunately, unless and until documentation emerges from the archives at Inveraray, it will remain difficult to establish the precise dates, builders and architects of the many houses at Cove built after 1848 on Argyll land on the Rosneath peninsular. Attributions can, however, be made on the basis of details similar to those found in Craig Ailey (the 'Italian Villa') as well as at Seymour Lodge; indeed, had these two villas not been illustrated in *Villa and Cottage Architecture* we would now know very much less about Baird & Thomson's early work. It is likely that in addition to Seymour Lodge, several Gothic or Baronial designs at Cove were by Thomson. The original parts of 'Craigrownie House' (later Castle) and of



Above: Rampisham Rectory, Dorset, by A.W.N. Pugin: André Goulancourt, 1986 [André Goulancourt]

Below: Braehead Villa, Cathcart: Gavin Stamp, 1998.



'Knockderry Castle' can both be firmly attributed to Thomson and suggest that he could have become an accomplished exponent of the Scottish Baronial had he chosen to (Baird & Thomson also may have designed several Baronial villas which once stood at the distant end of Pollokshaws Road). And then there is 'Crag Owllet', originally called 'Ivy

Cave Cottage', a pair of semi-detached houses, each containing two dwellings, built by Shore Road for John McElroy. This is a particularly interesting and accomplished design, with the wide segmental arched windows familiar from Seymour Lodge but combined with unusual and perverse details. These include the concave faces to the two



projecting polygonal bay-windows, a feature reminiscent of the concave facets – like the fluting on a Greek Doric column – on the northern rounded corner of Thomson's Queen's Park Terrace in Glasgow.

All these Gothic or Baronial designs would seem to belong to the first half of the 1850s and thus pre-date Thomson's rejection of other styles and his adoption of a personal and distinctive Greek language. As Henry-Russell Hitchcock put it,

"He does not continue the Greek, he returns to the Greek, finding in it in the '50s a personal vehicle quite as the leading English architects of the time were finding in continental mediaeval work their personal vehicles." [3]

This bold decision, which made Thomson unique in Britain, seems to have been taken in the middle of the decade at about the time the partnership with John Baird was terminated, and it resulted in such domestic masterpieces as 'Rockbank House', now 'Rockland', at Helensburgh and 'Upper Clifton House', now 'Tor House', at Rothesay. Yet the story is not quite so simple, and the evidence suggests that Thomson continued just occasionally to design in Gothic – perhaps when he thought no-one was looking.

One possible example is 'Kirklea', originally called 'Baron's Hall', at Cove. The evidence suggests that this was built shortly before 1860 next



Above: Cove Cottage, Cove: Gavin Stamp, 1998.  
Below: Cragowlet, Cove: Gavin Stamp, 1998.



to the amazing and wildly eclectic 'Glen Eden'. It is a most unusual Gothic house, with a small Classical pediment placed at the top of the tall pointed gable and a canted first-floor bay window with a central mullion rising within the gable above the balcony over the ground floor bay window. A firm attribution to Thomson is suggested by the recessed planes of the ground floor masonry walls flanking

the front elevation – a distinctive personal mannerism which appears at Glen Eden and at Craig Ailey. Yet the tall high-pitched roof contradicts the argument advanced by Thomson in his 1864 lecture 'On the Unsuitableness of Gothic Architecture to Modern Circumstances.' "High pitched roofs originated when thatch was used as a covering," he maintained,



"and then the steep slope was absolutely necessary to run the rain off, which otherwise would have soaked through; but as slate is now almost universally used, a comparatively low pitch is found to answer the purpose. But, besides rain and snow, our climate is notorious for boisterous winds, and high roofs are not the best adapted for resisting these... In short, proprietors of country or coast residences having roofs of the orthodox equilateral pitch, calculate upon their shedding their slates on the approach of winter as regularly as the trees shed their leaves..."[4]

Although this lecture preceded the announcement appointment of Scott to design the new buildings at Gilmorehill, it is clear that, by 1864, Thomson regarded the Gothic Revival as a threat. His more celebrated 1866 lecture, 'An inquiry into the appropriateness of the Gothic style for the proposed buildings for the University of Glasgow, with some remarks upon Mr. Scott's plans', was fuelled by anger at the appointment of a fashionable English Gothic Revivalist without competition and this led Thomson to adopt an extreme contrary position in the 'Battle of the Styles'. That Thomson could also be more objective and that he had a certain regard for the creators of Mediaeval rather than modern Gothic is suggested by his description in the lecture of

"a noble struggle going on – we notice with intense interest the strength, the agility, and the earnestness with which these

men climb towards the light, and most heartily award to them the highest meed of praise; but just in proportion as we admire the genuine Goth, and the degree of progress to which he attained, so do we regret the retrograde movement which has been going on for the last thirty or forty years."[5]

And after the *Building News* carried extracts from his 'Protest Against Gothic', Thomson wrote to the editor to insist "that I am not insensible to the merits of Gothic architecture. On the contrary, it has ever been to me a source of deep interest and delight. But I hold that it never reached the highest place amongst architectural styles, and that, from its nature, it never can – that the spirit and circumstances which produced it do not now exist; and I

condemn not only as vain, but mischievous, all attempts to apply it to modern purposes."[6] Furthermore, had he been spared, Thomson would have discussed Islamic and Gothic architecture in a second series of Haldane Lectures, and Thomas Gildard later recalled that

"Mr Thomson had admiration for genuine old Gothic work, although he had little sympathy with much of the new, and it was his intention to have visited several of the great English cathedrals, one of his objects being study for the continuation of his lectures."[7]

Even so, given the ferocity of his criticisms of the Gothic Revival in his 1866 public and published lecture, it might seem unlikely that he would ever dare employ in the Gothic style



Above: Baron's Court, Cove: Gavin Stamp, 2002.

again, yet the evidence suggests that he may have done so towards the end of his life.

In 1864, Thomson designed Langside Academy on the corner of Langside Avenue and Camphill Avenue in his characteristic Grecian villa manner. As John McLeish described in *Newsletter* N°11 in 1994, the client was Mrs Jane Constable Adam, the widow of the first principal. In his letter to his brother George of 20th September 1872, Thomson noted that the estimate for “a set of plans which I made of a double villa for Mrs Adam and her son-in-law Mr. J.H. Robertson” turned out too high.[8] Yet a double villa, or pair of semi-detached houses, was built next to Langside Academy in Camphill Avenue and it was ready for occupation in 1873. Unlike the Academy building it survives today; more to the point, it is not Greek but Gothic. Now it is possible that Mrs Adam changed her architect at the end of 1872, but it is surely more likely that the Thomson & Turnbull office responded with a second, cheaper design, especially as the executed building has features typical of Thomson’s earlier Gothic work. The gabled end bays are filled by double-height roofed bay windows similar to those at Braehead Villa or the Lincoln Villa, while the two intervening dormers are of the triangular type used first at Seymour Lodge.



Above: Edgehill House, Camphill Avenue, Langside (gable bargeboards simplified): Gavin Stamp, 1998.

It is conceivable that this pair of houses, known as ‘Edgehill House’, was the consequence of a frustrated and ailing Thomson passing the commission on to his partner Robert Turnbull, who then produced a design based on Thomson’s old drawings. But it is equally possible that this simplified Gothic design is a late essay by Thomson himself in the style he felt obliged publicly to despise. As Thomson lamented in his 1866 lecture attacking the Gothic design for the University, “I know that it is vain to fight with fashion.”[9] Intellectually committed as he was to one style, Thomson was nevertheless still a commercial architect, necessarily concerned to respect his client’s wishes

and unable single-handed to vanquish the taste for the Mediæval. So just as his old adversary George Gilbert Scott had compromised over the Foreign Office and produced an Italianate design to satisfy the prime minister, Lord Palmerston, perhaps Alexander Thomson was also prepared sometimes to swallow his principles and to revert to his earlier manner. ‘Greek’ Thomson was also ‘Gothic’ Thomson.

## References

1. *Alexander Thomson Society Newsletter* no.22, 1998, p.15.
2. see Colin MacKellar, ‘Printing by Numbers’, in *Newsletter* no.16, 1996.
3. letter to Graham Law 13th March 1950 [Mrs Graham Law].

*Continued on Page 19*

# Peter Angelo Nicholson, contd.

1850s and 1860s. Among the most prominent were John Fraser (the first teacher of Frank Furness) and Alexander Milne Calder, the Aberdeen-born sculptor. Did these men gamble on Philadelphia because they were well-informed, and had definite prospects? Was there an information network – a Philadelphia-Glasgow axis that ran between Nicholson and his brother-in-law Thomson? Here, alas, the record is mute.

Nonetheless, during his years in Philadelphia and Chicago, Nicholson clearly maintained some contact with his family in Glasgow. Over half a century after his emigration, he was still vivid enough for his grand-niece (the granddaughter of his sister and Alexander Thomson) to paste his obituary into the family memoir. That he exchanged architectural ideas and gossip with his brother-in-law has not been proved, although it seems likely. Gavin Stamp and Andor Gomme have suggested that Thomson was informed about American architecture – such as the Greek Revival pattern books of Minard Lafever – by Nicholson. The case is circumstantial, but it seems borne out by the architectural evidence.

From Windrim's office, the remainder of Nicholson's career shows a downward trajectory. In later years he drifted to the office of Otto Wolf (1856-1916). Wolf ran a busy office with a national practice, but his specialty was breweries, which

he turned out with Teutonic abandon, top-heavy brick affairs freighted with pressed metal cupolas. There can have been little glory in this professional end game. Nicholson retired and died in the suburb of Germantown in 1902.

Of Nicholson's career, we have virtually nothing. Other than the Reddick House, only his slim pattern book is securely documented. Given his promising credentials and youthful audacity, this career must be deemed a failure. The exchange of his private practice for draftsmen's wages certainly suggests failure of a sort. For this the explanation ought to be sought within the intangibles of character. In architecture, as in other fields, the ingredients for success include training, connections and talent, but these alone are not sufficient, and require the leaven of temperament – the ability to communicate solidity and sobriety to clients, a capacity for sustained work, and a certain discipline with the checkbook. Evidently Nicholson lacked one or all of these qualities. No doubt his frequent changes of address – beginning with that at the age of sixteen – bespeak a certain restlessness of spirit.

Nicholson's career shows that Scottish architects were established in Philadelphia in depth, at the head of firms, at the stone quarry and even in the drafting room. At any rate,

Philadelphia in the 1860s approached English High Victorian architecture tentatively and slowly, and meanwhile lingered long over the cold gray granites.

## The author

Michael J. Lewis, assistant professor at Williams College, Massachusetts, is an architectural historian who recently published *Frank Furness: Architecture and the Violent Mind*, a very fine study of that curious and wild American Gothicism – some of whose work has intriguing resonances with Thomson's.

## Bibliography

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- Ericsson, Henry, *Sixty Years a Builder* (Chicago, 1942)
- Greiff, Constance, *John Notman* (Philadelphia, 1979)
- Tatman, Sandra L. and Roger W. Moss, *Biographical Dictionary of Philadelphia Architects, 1730 to 1930* (Boston, 1985)
- Withey, Henry F. and Elsie Rathburn Withey, *Biographical Dictionary of American Architects (Deceased)* (Los Angeles, 1956)

**For more information  
on Peter Angelo  
Nicholson and his  
family, see over**

# Peter Angelo Nicholson's family

PETER Angelo Nicholson, was Michael Angelo Nicholson's third child from his marriage to Agnes Gibson, and his eldest son. He was born on 19th March 1829 at his family's home in Euston Square, London, from where his father taught architecture. Like all his brothers and sisters seem to have been, he was christened at St Pancras Old Church.

In November 1841, when Peter Angelo was twelve, his father died in London at the age of 47. We don't know what happened then, but times are likely to have been hard: a last sister, Margaret Jamieson, was born a month after her father's death. Certainly by 1845, Michael Angelo's widow Agnes (sometimes called 'Nancy') had returned to her native Glasgow and set up home in Aitken Place (off Argyle Street, west of Douglas Street): she died there in December 1845, shortly after her 46th birthday, having borne ten children. The eldest child, Marrion (or Marion) had been born in 1824; she died in Glasgow in March 1845; the youngest, Margaret Jamieson, died two months later.

Others also died young: Nancy I, born in 1834, died at eighteen months; John Thomas, born in 1836, was listed as a sea apprentice in the 1851 census (he was then living with his uncle Alexander's family in South Apsley Place), but later disappears from view. Even if they reached adulthood, several of Michael Angelo's children

did not reach old age: Jessie, who married John Baird in a double ceremony with her sister Jane Nicholson (who married Baird's partner, Alexander Thomson), died before the age of 40, though Jane lived to 74; Helen, born in 1831, married a Glasgow shirtmaker and hosier, John Fraser, bore him three children and died at 26; Nancy II, born in 1839, died unmarried at 36.

Aside from Jane, however, both Peter Angelo and his brother Michael Angelo were long-lived: Peter Angelo, born in 1829, lived to 1902; Michael Angelo became a soldier in India, witnessed the Indian Mutiny and wrote back about it to his brother-in-law Alexander, and died, apparently unmarried, in Barnet, Hertfordshire in 1903.

In June 1844, Peter Angelo's grandfather, Peter Nicholson died in Carlisle; the death of two sisters and his mother during 1845 left him, at 16, the male head of the household. So why should he have left for Philadelphia, probably after the winter gales had eased in the Atlantic in the spring of 1846?

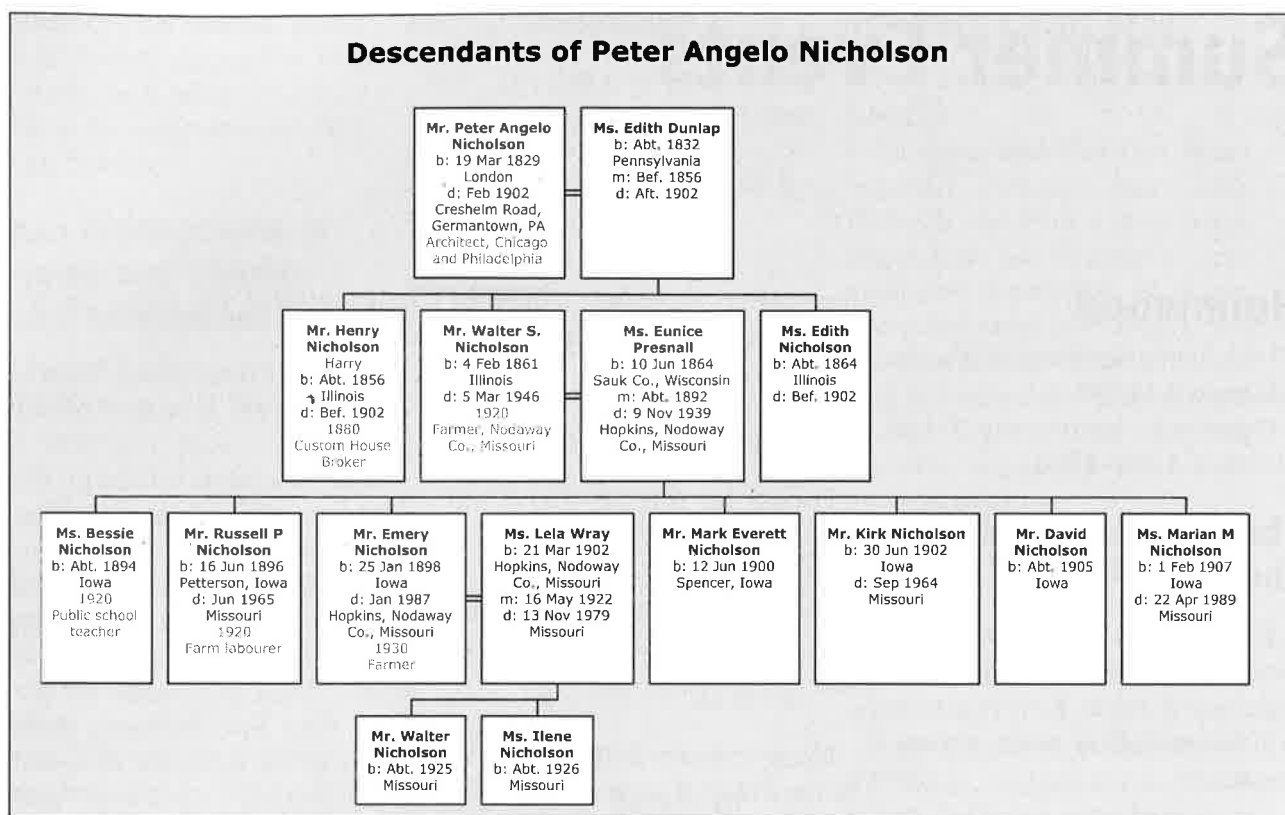
Was there some family or professional connection in Philadelphia willing to support him? If so, that support may have been short-lived: four years later, in the spring of 1850, Peter Angelo appears in the US Census for North Ward, Philadelphia, staying in a lodging house with several others, mostly young

professionals such as doctors. Aged 21, he already describes himself as an architect, though claiming to be born in Scotland: perhaps he was trying to fit in with the Scottish diaspora.

Perhaps he went to America to recoup some of the lost income from Philadelphia-based publishers of his grandfather's and father's works. In the early 19th century Philadelphia was the centre of American publishing, although New York was rapidly displacing it. The absence of any operational copyright law, the proliferation of publishing houses in response to a massively rising population eager to read, and the low price of machine-made paper, meant that works by popular authors (Byron, and Scott's Peveril of the Peak being notable examples) could be found in cheap pirate editions within thirty-six hours of a copy arriving in America. Peter Nicholson's long-lasting money troubles seem to indicate that, however popular his works might be in the US, he was receiving no income from them. Was his failed joint venture with Wadskier an attempt to beat the pirates at their own game, seeking a way to capitalise on his family's reputation while updating designs to suit American mid-century taste?

Whatever the reason for leaving Glasgow, he left behind four sisters, Jane (20), Jessie

## Descendants of Peter Angelo Nicholson



(18), Helen (14), Nancy (6) and two younger brothers, Michael Angelo (13) and John Thomas (9). Soon, both boys had taken up a profession (soldiering and seafaring respectively); within two years, both older sisters had married. Alexander Thomson and John Baird might have married the daughters and

## 'Gothic' Thomson

4. Gavin Stamp, ed., *The Light of Truth and Beauty*, Glasgow 1999, p.57.

5. *ibid.*, p.74

6. *Building News*, 8th June 1866, p.384; letter quoted in full in *Newsletter* no.30, 2002, p.5.

7. Thomas Gildard, 'Greek Thomson' (1888), in *Newsletter* no.20, 1998, p.14

8. *Newsletter* no.12, 1995, p.9; also see Judy Wardlaw, 'The Adam family of Langside Academy', in *Newsletter* no.32, 2002.

9. *The Light of Truth and Beauty*, p.84.

For further details of all the buildings mentioned, see the List of Works in Gavin Stamp, *Alexander 'Greek' Thomson*, London 1999

granddaughters of noted architects, but they certainly don't seem to have married for money.

In America, Peter Angelo also married, sometime before 1856: his wife was Edith Dunlap, the Pennsylvania-born daughter of Irish immigrants. They had three children between 1856 and 1864: Henry (or 'Harry'), who in the 1880 Census was listed as a Custom House Broker, presumably at Philadelphia's Custom House; Walter, who in 1880 was a salesman but later moved to Missouri, and became a farmer; and one daughter, also Edith. Henry and Edith had died by 1902, when an obituary for Peter Angelo notes that only his widow and Walter survive.

Walter's move to Missouri was via the adjacent state of Iowa, where he probably married Eunice Presnall, from a large, Wisconsin-based Quaker family, and had seven children, five sons and two daughters.

The eldest child, Bessie, became a schoolteacher; the eldest son, Russell, enlisted during the Great War, spent his war undertaking quartermastering duties at Camp Bowie, Texas, later worked on the family farm, and died in 1965; the second son, Emery, didn't join up, seems to have inherited the farm, later married, and died in 1987, aged 99; a third son, Mark, joined Iowa State College Training Corps during the Great War, but never fought. Information about the rest of the family remains sketchy.

The obituary collected by Mrs WL Stewart for Peter Angelo published in a Philadelphia newspaper (probably the *Inquirer*) states that he "trained in the profession of his father and grandfather, both prominent architects." With him, it seems, the architectural bloodline of the Nicholson family comes to an end.

# Summer Events

## Holmwood

61-63 Netherlee Road Cathcart  
Glasgow G44 3YG.

Opening hours to 31st  
October: 1200-1700.

## Thomson sideboard on show

From 16th May to 31st October, the 'Greek' Thomson sideboard from Kelvingrove will be on display in the dining room.

## Architecture Week, 20th-29th June

**Sunday 22nd June:** Guided walk led by Roger Guthrie from Pollok House to Millbrae Crescent. £5. Meet at Pollock House, 1400.

**Thursday 26th June:** Evening lecture by Roger Watts 'The Holmwood Frieze' £5 inc. wine and strawberries

**Saturday 28th June:** 'Conserving Holmwood' Information and exhibition about the various aspects of conservation work at the property.

**Sunday 29th June:** Guided walk led by Roger Guthrie from Millbrae Crescent to Holmwood. £5. Meet at Millbrae Crescent, 1400.

[www.architectureweek.org.uk](http://www.architectureweek.org.uk)  
for more information.

## Exhibition

Selected paintings by Matt Ewart will be on show in a changing programme through

the season, including paintings of Holmwood and the landscape.

## Pride and Prejudice

Friday, 1st August, 1930. An open-air evening performance by Illyria in the grounds of Holmwood (Bring something to sit on, refreshments, a picnic and midge repellent!).

Please contact Sally White at Holmwood if you would like further information about any of the above events. Tel: 0141 637 2129 or email: [swhite@nts.org.uk](mailto:swhite@nts.org.uk)

## West End Festival 2003

Some highlights from this year's West End Festival's Walks and Talks programme.

For more: [www.westendfestival.co.uk](http://www.westendfestival.co.uk)

All tickets for Friends of Glasgow West Guided Walks are available from: Barretts Newsagents, 263 Byres Road. Credit card sales 0900-1100. 0141 339 0488. The meeting point for each walk is stated on the ticket.

## A West End Weekend in Victorian and Edwardian Glasgow

Fri 13-Sun 15 June, £30 each day, 0930-1630 (Fri - Sat), 1000-1200 (Sun). Sunday admission free to those who

have enrolled for either Friday or Saturday.

Boyd Orr Lecture Theatre,  
University of Glasgow 0141  
330 1853.

Experts on Glasgow's Victorian and Edwardian West End present illustrated lectures on its history, architecture, decorative arts and future development. Hosted by David Martin MBE and based on the 2002 West End Lectures, these authoritative talks are designed to inform, educate and entertain. Sponsored by the Architectural Heritage Society of Scotland.

## A Walk through Old Partick

Sun 15 June, 1900, £6.50 in advance.

A guided walk through Old Partick with local historian Bill Spalding, taking in the sites of the Bishop's Mill and other mills, the Quaker's burying ground, the shipyards at the mouth of the River Kelvin, the old village with its long history, and more recent modern developments.

## Alexander 'Greek' Thomson

Mon 16 June, 1900, £6.50 in advance.

Join Roger Guthrie, expert on architect Alexander 'Greek' Thomson, in a perambulation around the West End to observe and discuss some of the splendid listed buildings



designed by this famous world-class architect. Along the way, the walk will also examine buildings by other notable West End architects.

### **Annan Photographs of Glasgow and Charles Rennie Mackintosh**

Mon 16 June, 1900-2200, Hillhead Library, Byres Rd 0141 339 7223, Free.

Talk and slideshow by Douglas Annan.

### **Industrial Archaeology of the River Kelvin**

Tues 17 June, 1900, £6.50 in advance.

John Hume, industrial archaeology expert, walks along the natural gorge of the River Kelvin, which became an important part of Glasgow's industrial history, both before and after the invention of the steam engine.

### **The Private Pleasure Gardens of the West End (New Walk)**

Wed 18 June, 1900, £6.50 in advance.

Landscape Architect Judith Parsons looks at the 'Private Pleasure Gardens' or 'Communal Gardens' in the West End and considers some of the issues facing their owners today.

### **Dowanhill (New Walk)**

Thurs 19 June, 1900, £6.50 in advance.

Historian Gordon Urquhart leads a ramble around Dowanhill, architecturally the most diverse of the many great estates which came to form Glasgow's West End.

### **Poetic Anniesland**

Fri 20 June 1430-1600, Anniesland Library, 833 Crow Rd 0141 954 5687, Free.

Talk on Old Anniesland by Edith Little.

### **Hyndland**

Sun 22 June, 1900, £6.50 in advance.

Join local historian Ann Laird in a tour around this highly planned Edwardian development of exclusive red sandstone tenements. Along the way, hear about the early days of the original Hyndland railway station, the churches, the school, the bank and the bowling club.

### **The Historic Burgh of Hillhead**

Mon 23 June, 1900-2200, Hillhead Library, Byres Rd 0141 339 7223, Free.

The author of *Along Great Western Road* presents an illustrated talk on the brief life (1869 -91) of the independent burgh of Hillhead, Glasgow's first suburb west of the Kelvin.

### **An Artist's View**

Mon 23 June, 1900, £6.50 in advance.

An evening walk with painter Avril Paton to view and discuss some of the buildings and locations she has committed to canvas.

### **Govan on the Clyde**

Tues 24 June 1400-1530, Partick Library, 305 Dumbarton Rd 0141 339 1303, Free.

Talk by Pat Donnelly.

### **The Park Circus Area**

Tues 24 June, 1900, £6.50 in advance.

Architect and historian Fiona Sinclair repeats her walk through the Park Circus area, regarded as Britain's pre-eminent example of early Victorian town planning. Learn about architect Charles Wilson and his splendid terrace houses in Park Circus, many of which are now being converted back to residential use.

### **A World Tour of the West End**

Wed 25 June, 1900, £6.50 in advance.

A look at some of the historic buildings of this area, which reflect buildings or architectural styles elsewhere, with David Martin, architectural historian.

### **Kelvingrove Park**

Thurs 26 June, 1900, £6.50 in advance.

Join Stanley Hunter, Glasgow's leading authority on the history of this venerable park, home to the 1888, 1901 and 1911 Great Exhibitions. Free booklet included.

### **Old Maryhill Revisited**

Fri 27 June, 1400-1600, Maryhill Library, 1508 Maryhill Rd 0141 946 2348, Free.

A dip into 19th century Maryhill by William Black.

### **Doors Open Day: 20th, 21st September (tbc)**

A weekend of access to buildings old and new across Glasgow and further afield. Dates for other parts of Scotland may vary.

# AGM Report

**Draft Minutes of the 12th Annual General Meeting of the Society, held on Wednesday, 28th November 2002 at the Mitchell Library, Kent Road, Glasgow**

**M**EMBERS of the Society who are unable to attend the AGM, especially those living outside Glasgow, have in the past been at something of a disadvantage, since the Minutes of each year's AGM only tend to appear at the following year's meeting for amendment (if necessary) and ratification.

To provide greater information to Society members, the Committee, draft minutes of the 2002 AGM are reproduced here, but will still be subject to amendment and ratification at the 2003 AGM.

## Preamble

Before the meeting opened, the Hon. Secretary advised the meeting of a letter he had received from a member complaining about the amount of notice given for the meeting, and the quality of detail made available in the notice. He asked the meeting to take a view on whether the AGM should proceed, or whether it should be postponed to the next planned meeting of the Society in early 2003. The Hon. Secretary also advised the meeting that the questions raised in the member's letter as to the sufficiency of the notice given, would be discussed by the new Committee during 2003.

The meeting agreed on a show of hands, with none dissenting, that notice of the AGM had been properly given

and that the AGM should open as previously notified.

## Attendance

The 12th AGM opened with approximately 50 members of the Society present.

## Apologies

Apologies had been received from Lesley Kerr, Alison Cowey, James Sheffield, Peter Dallas Ross, Edward Taylor.

## Minutes of the 11th AGM

The Minutes of the 11th Annual General Meeting were agreed. Proposed: Colin McKellar; Seconded: Irene Stewart.

## Chairman's Remarks

The Chairman, Gavin Stamp, commented on the work of the Society in the previous twelve months, and on the Committee's casework over that period. He outlined the reasons for the Society's relocation of its headquarters from 1 Moray Place to Holmwood, which would formally come into effect from 1st April 2003. He also suggested that the Society should consider establishing an Events Sub-Committee to manage day trips and other activities.

## Hon. Secretary's Remarks

The Hon. Secretary, Dominic d'Angelo, commented on the production of two Newsletters over the previous twelve months and on the launch of the Society's website.

## Hon. Treasurer's Remarks

The Hon. Treasurer, Irene Stewart, spoke to the Society's Income and Expenditure account, which had been checked by the Society's independent scrutineer, Frances Manley. The accounts were accepted. Proposed: Gavin Stamp; Seconded: Dominic d'Angelo.

## Cases

The Chairman expanded on the casework of the Society, including work around the Watson Street/Bell Street warehouses, the continuing deterioration of Caledonia Road Church, and plans to continue the restoration of the St Vincent Street Church.

## Activities

The Chairman spoke on the activities of the Society in the previous year, including the 2002 Lecture Series, and journeys to Carlisle, Cove and Kilcreggan. He also commented on those planned for 2003, including the Winter Lectures

and the long-awaited erection of the Thomson headstone.

## Elections

a. Hon. Secretary. Dominic d'Angelo offered himself for re-election, and was re-elected nem con. Proposed: Gavin Stamp; Seconded: Robert Stewart.

b. Hon. Treasurer. Irene Stewart offered herself for re-election for a final term of office, and was re-elected nem con. Proposed: Peter McNeill; Seconded: Gavin Stamp.

c. Hon. Minutes Secretary. Lesley Kerr offered herself for re-election, and was re-elected nem con. Proposed: Irene Stewart; Seconded: Sally White.

d. One Committee Member. Roger Guthrie stood down at this meeting and offered himself for re-election. He was re-elected nem con. Proposed: Gavin Stamp; Seconded: Robert Stewart.

e. Co-opted Committee members. Richard Myall and Colin McCluskey offered themselves for co-option to the Committee. Richard Myall was proposed by Irene Stewart, seconded by Robert Stewart; Colin McCluskey was proposed by Sally White, seconded by Gavin Stamp. The meeting accepted them as co-opted Committee members nem con.

e. Appointment of an external examiner. Frances Manley offered herself for re-appointment and was re-appointed nem con. Proposed:

## INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT 1 Nov 2001 to 31 Oct 2002

INCOME	2002	2001
	£	£
Subscriptions	3941.28	3144.66
Book, Video, etc.	139.30	431.52
Book Royalties	73.95	366.47
Donations	101.00	140.00
Transferred Donations	125.00	500.00
Bank Interest	28.69	44.38
Gift Aid	543.73	
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>4952.95</u></b>	<b><u>4627.03</u></b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
	£	£
Newsletters	2202.20	
Administration	1709.55	1857.58
Anniversary Party	454.58	
Subscriptions	171.55	163.43
Video	126.90	
Miscellaneous	90.00	120.00
Transferred Donations	125.00	500.00
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>2096.21</u></b>	<b><u>5424.69</u></b>
<b>Surplus/(Deficit)</b>	<b><u>2856.74</u></b>	<b><u>(797.66)</u></b>
Premier Account	8.59	8.48
Current Account	4365.14	1508.40
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>4373.73</u></b>	<b><u>1516.88</u></b>
Irene Stewart (Treasurer)		

Dominic d'Angelo; Seconded: Robert Stewart.

## Any Other Business

Robert Stewart spoke to a paper circulated at the meeting, proposed by the Committee, to amend the Subscription levels

for the Society. After some discussion, the proposal was accepted nem con.

## Closure

The meeting closed at approximately 7:40pm.

## The Alexander Thomson Society

Founded in 1991 to promote the life and works of Alexander 'Greek' Thomson (1817-1875)

Patrons: The Earl of Glasgow, Professor Andor Gomme, Professor Andrew MacMillan.

Chairman: Dr Gavin Stamp.

Hon. Secretary:  
Dominic d'Angelo.

Hon. Treasurer:  
Irene Stewart.

Minutes Secretary:  
Lesley Kerr.

Members of the Committee:  
Graeme Arnott, Mark H. Baines, Roger Guthrie, Alan McCartney, Colin McCluskey, Matthew Merrick, Mary Miers, Richard Myall, Robert Stewart, Sandy Stoddart, Edward Taylor.

External examiner of the Society's accounts: Frances Manley.

Registered as a Society with charitable purposes, N<sup>o</sup> SC021447.

The Alexander Thomson Society Newsletter is published by The Alexander Thomson Society, Holmwood, 57-63 Netherlee Road, Cathcart, Glasgow G44 3YG, to whom all enquiries and correspondence should be addressed.

Website:  
[www.greekthomson.com](http://www.greekthomson.com)

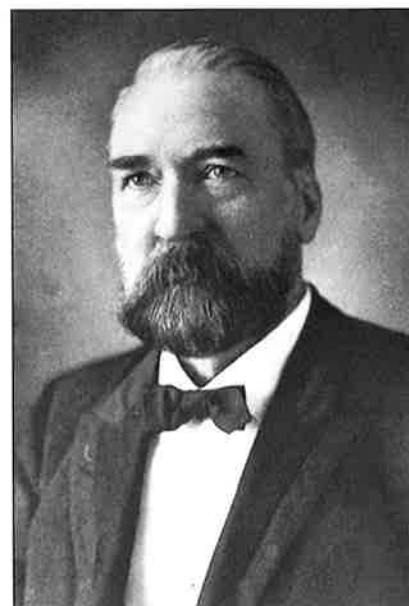
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The next Newsletter will appear in September 2003.

## The Audsleys in Liverpool

**R**EGULAR readers of this *Newsletter* will have encountered several bulletins about those enigmatic Scottish-born architects and designers, the brothers Audsley, while those who went on our visit to Liverpool in 1995 will recall the spectacular interior of their Princes Road Synagogue.

William James and George Ashdown Audsley (*right*) were such admirers of the Thomson Greek style that they took it to Manhattan and Milwaukee via Liverpool. It is in Liverpool, at the Walker Art Gallery, that an exhibition is being mounted about their work. *The Audsleys, Victorian Pattern Designers*, runs from until August 25th and concentrates on their



pattern designs and publications while exhibiting examples of their furniture and other decorative arts.

The connection with Thomson and Glasgow will be explored at a study day on July 12th (inquiries to 0151 478 4178).

## MEMBER OFFERS

Murray Grigor's video 'NINEVEH ON THE CLYDE: THE ARCHITECTURE OF ALEXANDER 'GREEK' THOMSON' is available to Society members at a special price of £12, inclusive of P&P.

The 55-minute video includes additional footage not seen in its original television showing. The video is available in VHS (also NTSC format for US viewers).

In 'THE LIGHT OF TRUTH AND BEAUTY', Alexander Thomson's public lectures are

brought together in a single volume. They reveal him as a powerful and eloquent speaker, and confirm that not only was he one of the most original architects of his time, but also that his was one of the greatest minds in Scottish architecture. Published at £9.95 paperback and £16.95 hardback, as a member of The Alexander Thomson Society, you can save almost 50% on the retail cost of the book.

Paperback: £6.00 (incl. P&P)

Hardback: £11.00 (incl. P&P)

Simply send your name and address with a cheque payable to 'The Alexander Thomson Society', and post it to 'Video Offer' or 'Light of Truth Offer', The Alexander Thomson Society, Holmwood, 57-63 Netherlee Road, Cathcart, Glasgow G44 3YG.